

5. On a West-African Kob Antelope.

By R. LYDEKKER.

[Received June 1, 1899.]

(Plate LIII.)

Among a series of specimens from Sierra Leone recently offered for purchase to the Natural History Museum are the skull and skin of a small female Kob (Plate LIII.) which do not agree with those of any species of the genus *Cobus* hitherto described. The entire specimen was obtained, together with examples of *C. cob*, between the Great and Little Scarcies Rivers, in the Sierra Leone Hinterland.

The skull, which is slightly larger than that of the female Kob described as *Cobus senjanus*, indicates an adult animal. And since it presents all the characters of the skull of the above-named genus, while the skin is likewise similar in general characters to the pelage of other Kob, the serial position of the animal may be taken for granted.

In size this Kob was approximately the same as the Senga Kob, or Buffon's Kob; and it evidently belongs to the same subsection of the genus. From the Puku and Senga Kob (or Puku) it is distinguished by the black on the front surface of the fore legs and the lower portion of the hind pair; the hair also is shorter.

The markings and plan of coloration are very similar to those of *C. cob*, but, instead of being uniformly foxy, the general colour of the middle of the back is dark chocolate-brown, gradually turning into tawny on the flanks, and thence into the dirty white of the abdomen. The leg-markings are similar to those of *C. cob*, the white rings on each fetlock being very distinct. There is also a similar white ring round the eyes. The hair on the withers and lower part of the neck is reversed.

So far as I can see, the skin indicates an animal closely allied to *C. cob*, but distinguished markedly by its colour. As the skin is not mounted, it is impossible to ascertain whether any differences in addition to coloration distinguish the two. But since I am not aware of the prevalence of melanism as an individual character of foxy antelopes, it appears highly probable that the skin and skull under consideration indicate an undescribed form. Whether the difference be of specific or subspecific value, it is hard to say; but, assuming its right to distinction, the form represented by the aforesaid skull and skin may be named *Cobus nigricans*.

I may add that among the same collection are also specimens of *C. cob*, a species of which the Museum has hitherto had no adult examples.

I may likewise take this opportunity of mentioning that Mr. R. T. Coryndon has lately presented to the Museum male and female skins of a Kob from Barotse-land which I identify with *C. senjanus*, described on the evidence of a female skull and skin obtained on the upper Loangwe river, westward of the northern end of Lake

Nyasa. The female has been mounted, and agrees generally with the description of the type. Thus, contrasted with a typical female Puku, it is of smaller size, with the crown of the head blackish, more black on the ears, and the general colour of a deeper red. There are, however, whitish rings on the fetlocks, which are stated to be absent in the type. The male apparently differs from the typical Puku chiefly in its smaller dimensions, the head and ears not showing an increase of black.

As Barotse-land is not very far from the upper Loangwe valley, there is no reason why the same form of Antelope should not inhabit both localities; and I cannot regard the above-mentioned difference in respect to the light rings on the fetlocks as of more than individual or local importance. In all characters the animal is essentially a Puku, of which I regard it merely as a subspecies, and accordingly prefer to call it the Senga Puku, *C. vardoni senjanus*, instead of *C. senjanus*.

6. On the Leopard of the Caucasus. By R. LYDEKKER.

[Received June 5, 1899.]

(Plate LIV.)

In his recently published work entitled 'Hunting Trips in the Caucasus,' Prince Demidoff states that the Snow-Leopard (*Felis uncia*) occurs in the Caucasus; and he figures (p. 85) an animal which is undoubtedly that species. I am informed, however, that the specimen from which that figure was taken is not of Caucasian origin. And as I find that Dr. Satunin¹ especially denies the occurrence of the Snow-Leopard in the Caucasus, I have endeavoured to make out what animal had been mistaken for it.

Dr. Satunin records the occurrence of the ordinary Leopard in the range, but without stating whether Caucasian examples differ from ordinary Indian Leopards on the one hand or from African Leopards on the other. But since the so-called *Felis tulliana* of Valenciennes occurs in Asia Minor² and also in Persia³, and bearing in mind the approximation to the Ounce exhibited by that variety of the Leopard, nothing would seem more likely than it should also be found in the Caucasus.

In confirmation of this view, I have recently received through the good offices of Messrs. Rowland Ward, Ltd., a Leopard-skin from the Caucasus belonging to Prince Demidoff.

Compared with an ordinary Indian Leopard this skin (Plate LIV.) is at once distinguishable by the irregular formation and small size of the rosettes, in which the centres are not appreciably darker

¹ Zool. Jahrb., Syst. ix. p. 290 (1896).

² See Danford and Alston, P. Z. S. 1880, p. 51.

³ See Blanford, 'Fauna of British India,' Mamm. p. 69 (1888); the so-called Ounce skins referred to by the same author in his 'Eastern Persia,' vol. ii. p. 35 (1875), also doubtless belong to the form described as *F. tulliana*.